

Film Annotation - "Capitalism: A Love Story"

Sustainability Problems

1. Title, director and release year?
 - "Capitalism: A Love Story" was released in 2009 and directed by Michael Moore.
2. What is the central argument or narrative of the film?
 - The central narrative of the film is how large corporations dominate the day-to-day lives of average Americans.
3. How is the argument or narrative made or sustained? How much scientific information is provided, for example? Does the film have emotional appeal?
 - Historical references are made and the American capitalist economy is described from its beginning after the Second World War. It then goes on to show how politicians began to corrupt the country as they became allied with corporate leaders. Many statistics are presented and historical events are cited. Not much science is used but then again it does not really warrant much scientific data.
4. What sustainability problem does the film draw out? Political? Legal? Economical? Technical? Media and Informational? Organizational? Educational? Behavioral? Cultural? Ecological?
 - The film focuses on economic, political, media and informational and cultural sustainability problems.
5. What parts of the film did you find most persuasive and compelling? Why?
 - I thought that the statistic saying only 37% of young people would prefer capitalism over socialism while 33% would prefer socialism over capitalism to be very compelling. It was shocking to me to hear these percentages because while there are some negative aspects to capitalism, as Americans who's families have been thriving in a capitalistic society for decades they would prefer a society where their basic needs are met and there are no incentives to do better. Also mentioned was the practice by large companies to take out insurance policies on their low wage employees so, when they die the company collects money from the insurance.
6. What parts of the film were you not compelled or convinced by? Why?
 - The film portrayed president Ronald Reagan as anti-worker's rights. This seems to be sort of taken out of context. While Reagan was against organized labor this didn't mean he was anti-worker's rights. Labor unions are powerful organizations and if left unchecked can be just as bad if not worse than out of control corporations. Unions that go beyond their workers rights and start to demand premiums for their constituents put a financial burden on the industry they labor for. For instance teachers unions drive up the benefits and salaries of teachers and school districts are left with less money to spend on supplies and programs for the children.
7. What audiences does this film best address? Why?
 - This film seems to address anyone who is interested in the problems with capitalism. Michael Moore is a known activist with very strong opinions. When watching this film a viewer should go in with a critical eye and keep their mind open to other ideas.
8. What could have been added to this film to enhance its environmental educational value?
 - This film didn't necessarily focus on environmental issues. It was more focused on political, economical and cultural issues.

9. What kinds of action and points of intervention are suggested by this film? If the film itself does not suggest corrective action, describe actions that you can imagine being effective.
 - Capitalists strongly oppose government intervention. Moore suggests an influx of democracy in the United States economic system. The people of the United States have no influence or say in the practices of big business. This is exemplified by the big bank and car bailouts of recent years.
10. What additional information has the film compelled you to seek out? (Provide at least two supporting references.)